



Attention Park Visitors and Anglers: **COLD KILLS TILAPIA**

COLD KILLS TILAPIA. The fish illustrated in the pictures above are TILAPIA. These warm water fish, native to Africa, cannot tolerate cold water temperatures below 55 degrees. When lake temperatures fall below 55° F, then TILAPIA most often die. This situation occurs during normal or cold winters and generally lasts a few weeks to a month. TILAPIA are found in this lake.

LAKE WATER IS SAFE. There is nothing wrong with this lake water; the death of TILAPIA is due to cold water temperatures only. A small or a large proportion of the TILAPIA population will die each year, depending on winter climate patterns. This phenomenon occurs each winter throughout Arizona in ponds, lakes, rivers and canals.

NO PUBLIC HEALTH RISK. Cold water temperatures cause the immune system of TILAPIA to fail, consequently dying TILAPIA are commonly found covered with a cottony fungus that other, healthy fish can resist. We recommend NOT keeping and eating any TILAPIA during this stress period. The fungus found on dead TILAPIA CANNOT be spread to humans.

OTHER FISH SAFE. All other fish such as trout, bass, bluegill and catfish are not affected and are safe to keep and eat from this lake. These other fish are healthy and are fully capable of adjusting to seasonal changes in water temperatures.

MORE INFO. Park staffs are working to remove all dead and dying TILAPIA on a daily basis. For more information contact your local parks and recreation office or the Arizona Game and Fish Department at (602) 942-3000.

